



AMERICAN EMBASSY QUITO - ECUADOR

Third Quarter 2008

American Citizen Newsletter

In this issue:

- The Embassy in Quito is Moving
- Voting Overseas: New Website Launched
- Travel Advice: Document Storage While Overseas
- Regional Security Office Crime Quarterly
- Organizational Profile: WorldTeach Ecuador
- Useful Links
- Hours and Contact Information

Move to New Embassy Compound

In mid-September, U.S. Embassy Quito is moving to its new, state-of-the-art building. New address and contact information is below:

Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Afaro

Telephone: 398-5000

We've gone to great lengths to ensure that American Citizen Services (ACS) operations are minimally affected during the move. The ACS schedule during the move is as follows:

Wednesday, 9/10: Last day at old Embassy (Avenida Patria) – normal hours as listed below

Thursday, 9/11; Friday, 9/12; Monday 9/15: Closed

Tuesday, 9/16: First day at New Embassy – normal hours

Voting Overseas: New Website Launched

We encourage you to visit the newly redesigned Federal Voting Assistance Program website at www.fvap.gov, the official U.S. government website for overseas voters. The updated website features an automated Voter Registration and Ballot Delivery tool that will greatly improve the vote-by-mail process.

There are two options for overseas voters using the FVAP website:

Visit www.fvap.gov and click “Get Started” to be directed to an online Federal Postcard Application and instructions for your state; or

Visit www.fvap.gov and click “Use our New Automated Tool to Register/Request a Ballot” under Quick Links in the lower right-hand corner of the home page. You will be redirected to www.fvap.com, a fully automated site that requires you to create a user account and password.

Voter Registration & Requesting an Absentee Ballot

Voters who have not yet registered to vote and requested an absentee ballot should do so now using the FVAP website. You may also pick up a hard copy of the Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) from any U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

You should also complete a new Federal Postcard Application if you have moved or changed your name since the last time you voted.

Voting

Your local voting officials should mail your absentee ballot 30 to 45 days before the November 4 general election. Return your voted ballot as early as possible. Be aware of your state’s ballot

receipt deadline, as well as any postmarking requirements. (Each state's requirements are available on the FVAP website.)

Emergency Ballots

The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) serves as an emergency ballot for voters who registered in time but fail to receive an official ballot from local election officials. You can access the FWAB using www.fvap.gov as well.

Questions?

The **Voting Assistance Officer** at the Embassy in Quito is also always available to answer questions about absentee voting. To contact the Voting Assistance Officer, send an e-mail to consularquito@state.gov

Travel Advice: Document Storage when Overseas

Go beyond copies of your passport docs and medical records

[Sarah Pascarella](#), SmarterTravel.com Staff - March 7, 2008

In case something goes wrong on your trip, it's always a good idea to have extra [copies](#) of your passport, itinerary, key medical records, and

the like. If your bags get lost, stolen, or are simply delayed, though, having all those extra copies stashed away in your luggage may not do you much good. There are two solutions that involve a lot less paper.

One is to back up all your documents on a [USB flash drive](#), which you can keep attached to your keychain. Prices for the most basic flash drives start at under \$10. If something goes wrong once you arrive at your destination, just turn over your flash drive to the nearest internet cafe, hospital, or travel official to access your documentation. You can also email copies of your documents to yourself—just make sure you send them to an email address you can access from any computer.

If you want a bit more security, consider setting up an account with an "online safe deposit box" through a company such as [KeepYou Safe](#), which enables you to upload key documents,

credit card and customer service numbers, travelers' check stubs, and more—for free. Your account will be password protected and guarded on a secure network.

Have a great travel tip you'd like to share? Send your insider travel strategies to editor@smartertravel.com.

Regional Security Office Crime Quarterly

Crime is a serious problem in Ecuador, and all American citizen residents and visitors should be alert and cautious. Each newsletter, the Embassy's Regional Security Office (RSO) will briefly describe recent crimes committed against American citizens in Ecuador and offer tips to help avoid these crimes:

- On May 11, 2008 at 12:45 PM, an American citizen was touring the Panecillo when he was approached by two men. One of the men distracted him while the other snatched his bag. Both men fled on foot, stealing the victim's bag and U.S. passport.
- On May 12, 2008 at 8:00 PM, an American citizen parked her vehicle on the street near 12 de Octubre and La Coruña. When she returned, she found that the vehicle had been broken into. Suspect (s) unknown stole four U.S. passports, a baby stroller, and a car seat.
- On May 25, 2008 at 7:30 PM, two American citizens were walking near Mariscal Foch and Diego de Almagro when they were approached by two men wielding knives. There was a slight struggle and the robbers escaped with the victims' passports and cell phones. No one was injured during the scuffle.
- On June 2, 2008 at 6:30 PM, an American citizen's room was burglarized while staying at a hotel in Quito. The victim left his room key with the front desk while touring the city. When he returned he discovered that his U.S. passport, \$1,578 in cash, and camera were missing. There was no forced entry into the room.

The RSO office would like to remind Americans that Ecuador is rated critical for crime by the U.S. State Department. He recommends that to avoid attacks, you should stay alert at all times and be aware of your environment. Also keep in mind:

- Victims may be selected because they appear to be wealthy. Avoid wearing large amounts of jewelry or carrying expensive electronics (cameras, iPods, etc).
- Avoid high crime areas such as, isolated areas in parking lots and dark streets.
- Avoid being time and place predictable and setting patterns in activities. Vary your times and routes of travel.

- Become familiar with your surroundings. Once you become familiar with your surroundings it will become easier to identify suspicious or out of place people and items.
- Keep emergency numbers readily available; provide your family with emergency numbers.
- Don't open your residence doors to unannounced and unidentified persons.
- If someone tries to rob you, don't resist. In most instances, it is safest to be non-confrontational and give up your belongings. Remember: There is nothing of any material value that is worth more than the personal health and well being of you and your family.

It is important that all American citizens exercise caution and proper judgment in Ecuador. For additional safety recommendations, including tips for avoiding pickpockets, incidents while driving or using public transportation, etc., [click here](#).

Worldwide Caution

In July, the Department of State issued an updated Worldwide Caution message describing the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against Americans and interests throughout the world. [Click here to view](#). Check travel.state.gov for the latest security information on individual countries..

Organizational Profile: WorldTeach Ecuador

We would like to make it a normal practice of highlighting charity and non-profit organizations through which Americans are working to assist Ecuador. We welcome organizations to submit a short (150-300 word) description of their group to the newsletter. If and when possible, in each future edition, we will highlight a different organization. This quarter's featured organization is WorldTeach Ecuador.

WorldTeach is a non-profit organization founded in 1986 by students at Harvard University that provides opportunities for volunteers to make meaningful contributions to education and community improvement in developing countries. WorldTeach has been in Ecuador since 1992 and works with various universities and community programs throughout the country that have specifically requested English teachers. WorldTeach is based at and affiliated with The Center

for International Development at Harvard University. For more information on WorldTeach Ecuador, go to http://www.worldteach.org/programs/ecuador_year/

Useful Links

Federal Income Tax Information: <http://www.irs.gov>

Voting Overseas: <http://www.fvap.gov>

Social Security: <http://www.ssa.gov>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: <http://www.dhs.gov>

Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov>

To obtain civil/vital records: <http://usavital.com>

International Travel Information: <http://www.state.gov>

Foreign Service Exam: <http://www.careers.state.gov>

U.S. Visas: <http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov>

Hours and Contact Information

The U.S. Embassy in Quito and Consulate in Guayaquil provide a full range of consular and passport services for American citizens. Please [click here](#) to access Quito's website for information on opening hours, contact information and general information on each our services.

Please [click here](#) for Consulate Guayaquil's general information.

The U.S. Embassy in Quito and Consulate in Guayaquil is closed on Ecuadorian and American holidays. In the coming months, we will observe the following holidays:

[September](#)

1st: Labor Day

[October](#)

10th: Guayaquil Independence Day

13th: Columbus Day

[November](#)

3rd: All Souls Day

11th: Veterans Day

27th: Thanksgiving

[December](#)

25th: Christmas

Contact information and opening hours

Quito: <http://ecuador.usembassy.gov/overview-and-contact-info.html>

Guayaquil: http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov/business_hours.html

Quito American Citizen Services

Notarials:

Monday - Thursday
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

All Other Services:

Monday – Thursday
1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Social Security:

Tuesday – Thursday
1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Telephone Inquiries: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Tel: (593) 256-2890 EXT. 4523 (Only Social Security)

Telephones:

Tel: (593) 256-2890

Fax: (593) 256-1524

For calls concerning the arrest, injury, serious illness, or death of an American citizen after regular business hours (5:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m.), please call: (593) 223-4126 or (593) 256-1749

E-mail:

General e-mail: Consularquito@state.gov

Guayaquil American Citizen Services

Passport and Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) services are available by appointment only Mondays through Thursdays, from 12 noon to 3:30 p.m. Notarials are available by appointment Fridays from 08:30 to 11:30 pm. Please use the following link http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov/online_appointments.html to schedule an appointment online. Emergency requests for services can be directed to our email address and office number.

- Via Email: acsguayaquil@state.gov

Please do not send your visa inquiries to this e-mail address.

- Via Telephone: Mondays through Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at (04) 232-3570 ext. 227 or 228

Please do not use these extensions for visa inquiries.

- In person: Mondays through Thursdays from 12:00 noon to 3:30 p.m. at the U.S. Consulate in Guayaquil, 2nd Floor.

For American Citizen Emergencies outside normal business hours, please call (04) 232-1152.

For business other than American Citizens Services, Immigrant Visas, or Non-Immigrant Visas, call (04) 232-3570 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.